



Chatham House Rule - AEA Annual Conference 2024

“When a meeting, or part thereof, is held under the Chatham House Rule, participants are free to use the information received, but neither the identity nor the affiliation of the speaker(s), nor that of any other participant, may be revealed.”

Explanation of the Rule

The Chatham House Rule originated at Chatham House with the aim of providing anonymity to speakers and to encourage openness and the sharing of information. It is now used throughout the world as an aid to free discussion. Meetings do not have to take place at Chatham House, or be organized by Chatham House, to be held under the Rule. Meetings, events and discussions held at Chatham House are normally conducted 'on the record' with the Rule occasionally invoked at the speaker's request. In cases where the Rule is not considered sufficiently strict, an event may be held 'off the record.'

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the benefits of using the Rule?

It allows people to speak as individuals, and to express views that may not be those of their organizations, and therefore it encourages free discussion. People usually feel more relaxed if they do not have to worry about their reputation or the implications if they are publicly quoted. It is widely used in the English-speaking world by local government and commercial organizations as well as research organizations.

Can participants in a meeting be named as long as what is said is not attributed?

It is important to think about the spirit of the Rule. For example, sometimes speakers need to be named when publicizing the meeting. The Rule is more about the dissemination of the information after the event - nothing should be done to identify, either explicitly or implicitly, who said what.

Can a list of participants at the meeting be published?

No – the list of participants should not be circulated beyond those participating in the meeting.